

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-01
SSM-03 SSO-00 /051 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH;DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. NEUMANN
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

-----014292 010259Z /63

O 010035Z DEC 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA

USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR

SUBJECT:DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - NOVEMBER 30

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EX-
CERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR NOVEMBER 30, 1977.
THE OFFICER FOR THE DAY WAS HODDING CARTER.

Q. THE PRESIDENT SPOKE OF DECEMBER 13TH OR THEREABOUTS.
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I REALIZE THAT DECEMBER 3RD WAS NEVER THE DATE. IT WAS
THE DATE FOR THE INVITATIONS TO COME IN. COULD YOU TELL
US IF THAT REPRESENTS A FIXED DATE OR IS IT ONE OF SEVERAL
DATES? IS THERE A SETBACK? IS THERE A PUSH BACK?

A. NO, THERE IS NO PUSH BACK. THAT WAS ONE THAT WAS
ARRIVED AT BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT. DECEMBER 13TH, I WOULD
HAVE TO SAY IS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE EXACT DATE MAY IN
FACT BE THE 12TH, 13TH, 14TH. I DON'T WANT TO SAY DECEM-
BER 13TH ABSOLUTELY, BUT IT WILL BE AROUND THAT PERIOD,
AND THERE IS AGREEMENT ON THAT.

Q. IS THERE AGREEMENT ON HOW LONG THAT INITIAL SESSION
MIGHT LAST?

A. I DON'T BELIEVE THERE IS AGREEMENT ON THAT.

Q. WOULD IT BE FAIR TO CALL IT AN OPEN-ENDED CONFERENCE
AT THIS POINT?

A. AT THIS POINT, YES, BUT THAT IN QUOTATION MARKS SORT
OF GIVES IT MAYBE A LONGER TERM THAN I WOULD WANT TO
SUGGEST.

Q. THERE IS NO FIXED TERM.

A. THERE IS NO FIXED TERM.

Q. EVEN IF SATURDAY HAD NOT BEEN A FIXED DATE, STILL THE 13TH IS A COUPLE OF WEEKS FROM NOW. IS THERE SOME PARTICULAR POINT IN WAITING? IS THERE SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE IN THE INTERIM? ARE WE HOPING THAT SOME OTHER COUNTRIES WILL BE LURED INTO COMING? WHY WAIT UNTIL THE 13TH OR SO?

A. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE
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EXCEPT SIMPLY THE ONE THAT THAT SEEMED TO BE THE ONE WHICH WAS MUTTUALLY AGREEABLE TO ALL OF THE PARTIES THAT ARE GOING TO BE PARTICIPATING, INCLUDING THE UN OBSERVER. INsofar AS HOPES OF GETTING OTHER PARTIES CONCERNED, I THINK THAT ALL THE RELEVANT PARTIES HAVE SPOKEN ON THE QUESTION, AND I BELIEVE WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT WE ARE GOING TO GET.

Q. LET'S PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, THEN. HAS IT DELIBERATELY BEEN SCHEDULED AFTER THE MEETINGS THAT ARE BEING ANNOUNCED FOR TRIPOLI AND BAGHDAD SO AS TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS THERE?

A. IT OCCURS TO ME THAT ONE OF THOSE MEETINGS IS TOMORROW AND THAT THAT WASN'T RELEVANT TO THIS.

Q. ONE MAYBE NEXT WEEK IN BAGHDAD.

A. I DON'T THINK THAT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT AT ALL.

Q. IS THERE ANY THOUGHT THAT EITHER MR. ATHERTON OR SOMEBODY HIGHER MAKING A TRIP TO THE AREA IN ADVANCE OF THIS MEETING?

Q. RIGHT.

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANY FIXED PLANS TO OFFER YOU ON SUCH A

TRIP. AS OF NOW, THERE ARE NO SET PLANS FOR IT. IF THAT CHANGES, AS I THINK I SAID INFORMALLY UP HERE YESTERDAY AFTER THE BRIEFING WAS OVER TO A LOT OF YOU, I WILL LET YOU KNOW. AS OF NOW, WHAT IS SET IS ROY'S PARTICIPATION.

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Q. THAT SOUNDS AN AWFUL LOT LIKE YOU ARE GUIDING US TO-

WARDS THE POSSIBILITY.

A. NO, WHAT I AM TRYING TO -- I HAVE BEEN SOMETHING LESS THAN THE MOST ABLE GUIDE HERE FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT A LOT OF DECISIONS ARE OBVIOUSLY BEING TAKEN AS WE GO ON EVENTS WHICH, AS MANY OF YOU HAVE ACCURATELY NOTED, WERE NOT ENTIRELY FORESEEN OR NOT IN ADVANCE. AND I JUST HESITATE TO WRITE OFF ANYTHING AT THIS POINT. I AM NOT TRYING TO HINT A THING TO YOU.

Q. WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT THE POSITION OF THE PARTIES BEING KNOWN, DO YOU FEEL THAT THE RUSSIAN REFUSAL TO GO TO THE CAIRO MEETING IS HELPFUL OF CONSTRUCTIVE IN ANY WAY?

A. AS THE PRESIDENT SAID, WE WOULD OF COURSE HAVE WISHED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE ATTENDED. AND TO THE EXTENT THAT NOT MERELY THE RUSSIANS BUT OTHER MEMBERS WHO ARE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE OVER-ALL SEARCH FOR A PEACE SOLUTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST DO NOT ATTEND IT, WE THINK THAT THAT OBVIOUSLY IS LESS THAN IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN IF THEY HAD ATTENDED IT.

Q. BUT THEY HAVE A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS THE CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WHICH YOU FEEL WOULD BE FACILITATED BY THIS MEETING.

A. AS THE PRESIDENT SAID, WE DO HAVE A DIVERGENCE OF VIEW WITH THE RUSSIANS ON THIS. AS TO WHETHER OR NOT WE THINK IT IS USEFUL, THEY DON'T, WE DO.

Q. THEY ARE THE COCHAIRMAN. THEY ARE NOT GOING. CAN YOU GIVE US SOME IDEA OF HOW WE INTEND TO FILL THE RUSSIANS IN, IF WE INTEND TO MAINTAIN SOME SPECIAL CHANNEL TO THEM. BY THAT I MEAN A THOROUGH BRIEFING, AN ANALYSIS ON OUR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PART. ARE WE GOING TO GIVE THEM EXTRA CONSIDERATION IN BRIEFING THEM THAN WE WOULD GIVE, FOR INSTANCE, THE OTHER PARTIES WHO ARE NOT GOING TO BE PRESENT?

A. I THINK THAT WE ARE GOING TO TRY TO KEEP ALL OF THE PARTIES INFORMED OF OUR PERSPECTIVE, AND WHAT WE UNDERSTAND THE FACTS TO BE AS THEY DEVELOP AT THAT CONFERENCE,

AND WHEN I SAY THE PARTIES, I MEAN THOSE WHO ARE DIRECTLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE OUTCOME, AND, OF COURSE, MANY WHO ARE INDIRECTLY CONCERNED. FOR INSTANCE, OUR ALLIES OBVIOUSLY IN EUROPE, WHO HAVE A VERY REAL INTEREST, BUT A SPECIAL ONE. I THINK, THAT WE ARE GOING TO BE BRIEFING A NUMBER OF PARTIES, AND THE SOVIET UNION WILL BE ONE.

Q. THERE IS A GENERAL PRACTICE WHEN THERE IS A CONFERENCE OF SOME KIND AND IT HAS RELEVANCE TO OTHER COUNTRIES. SOMEONE AFTERWARD MAKES A QUICK TOUR OF THE CAPITALS AND INFORMS THEM. IS THERE ANY SUCH PLAN OR PROPOSAL UNDER CONSIDERATION NOW, SO AS HAVING SOMEBODY GO TO THE RUSSIANS AND SORT OF GIVE THEM THE BOOST THAT YOU AND THE PRESIDENT AND ALL ARE TRYING SO HARD TO DO?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT AT THIS TIME. JUST KEEP ASKING ME. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON IT AT THIS TIME.

Q. DOESN'T THE CAIRO MEETING UNDERMINE THE AMERICAN POLICY IN REACHING A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT FOR THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. NO. THE PRESIDENT, I THINK, SPOKE TO THAT. HE, THE ADMINISTRATION, BELIEVES THAT THIS IS A CONSTRUCTIVE STEP IN THE PROCESS. WHEN TWO OF THE MAJOR PARTIES ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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TALKING DIRECTLY, WE THINK THAT IS A STEP ON THE WAY TOWARD COMPREHENSIVE PEACE.

Q. WOULDN'T YOU BE BREAKING YOUR PROMISE ON A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM?

A. NO. WE ARE CONTINUING TO SEEK SUCH A SETTLEMENT, AND WE THINK THIS IS A VALUABLE PART OF THE PROCESS.

Q. IN VIEW OF THIS GOAL OF OURS, IS THE U.S. CONCERNED THAT ISRAEL HAS TAKEN A NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD A BROADER SERIES OF TALKS THROUGH THE UN, AND ARE WE URGING ISRAEL TO REVERSE ITS STAND ON THAT?

A. NO, WE ARE NOT. WE ARE SIMPLY TRYING TO SEEK FROM SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM AND OTHERS WHAT THE REACTION HAS BEEN TO HIS PROPOSAL, AND WE WILL CONSIDER HIS PROPOSAL, AS THE PRESIDENT SAID, IN THE LIGHT NOT ONLY OF OUR OWN CONSIDERATIONS BUT ALSO WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT IT. BUT WE ARE NOT TAKING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN SEEKING TO FURTHER OR TO BLOCK THAT CONFERENCE. IT WAS, IN ANY CASE, SUGGESTED AS A POSSIBILITY BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE POSSIBILITY RESTS UPON THE WILLINGNESS OF THE PARTIES

DIRECTLY CONCERNED TO ATTEND SUCH A MEETING.

Q. IN VIEW OF OUR GOAL, WHICH YOU REITERATE HERE REPEATEDLY, OF HAVING A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT AND A BROADER CONFERENCE ULTIMATELY, WOULDN'T IT FOLLOW THAT WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PROMOTING THIS IDEA IN TRYING TO GET ISRAEL TO GO ALONG WITH IT, AS WE TRIED TO GET SYRIA AND

THE RUSSIANS AND OTHERS TO GO ALONG WITH THE CAIRO CONFERENCE?

A. WE ARE VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT THE OTHER PARTIES HAVE TO SAY ABOUT IT. IT IS AN INITIATIVE THAT HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL, AND WE ARE INTERESTED IN SEEING WHAT THE REACTION IS GOING TO BE TO IT.

Q. DID THE UNITED STATES ENCOURAGE THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO MAKE THIS PROPOSAL?

A. WE NEITHER ENCOURAGED NOR DISCOURAGED HIM. THE IDEA WAS DISCUSSED IN GENERAL TERMS, BUT HE PUT IT FORWARD FOR THE FIRST TIME FORMALLY AT THE TIME THAT HE PUT IT FORWARD FORMALLY.

Q. WHEN YOU DISCUSSED IT GENERALLY WITH HIM, WAS PART OF THAT DISCUSSION HIS DECISION TO INVITE THE PLO AS SUCH AS A PARTICIPANT MADE KNOWN TO THE UNITED STATES?

A. I AM NOT SURE THAT HE WENT INTO THE DETAILS IN THAT GENERAL DISCUSSION BEFOREHAND AS TO WHO IT WAS HE WAS THINKING OF INVITING. I THINK HE MADE IT PRETTY CLEAR HE WANTED IT TO BE, THAT HE WAS THINKING ABOUT A POSSIBILITY OF A GENERAL MEETING. BUT, I REPEAT, THE FORMAL PRESENTATION FLESHED OUT IN DETAIL WAS MADE PUBLICLY.

Q. BUT DO YOU KNOW WHETHER OR NOT HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED HIS INTENTION TO INVITE THE PLO AS SUCH?

A. I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT.

Q. CAN YOU TAKE THE QUESTION AND FIND OUT?

A. SURE. I WILL TRY TO TAKE IT. WHETHER I AM GOING TO BE ABLE TO GET YOU AN ANSWER, I DON'T KNOW.

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Q. HOW MANY TIMES DID SECRETARY VANCE DISCUSS THIS WITH SECRETARY WALDHEIM?

A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE QUESTION AROSE ONLY BRIEFLY BEFORE HE ANNOUNCED IT PUBLICLY. I AM SAYING

ONCE.

Q. ONLY BRIEFLY?

A. BECAUSE WE HAD, AS WE HAVE MADE CLEAR BEFORE, DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM AS WE HAD WITH OTHER PARTIES URGING HIM AND OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CAIRO CONFERENCE, AND THAT WAS THE THRUST OF MOST OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM.

Q. I SAY, AS YOU NOTE BY IMPLICATION THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD DISCOURAGED HIM, HE WOULD NOT HAVE GONE FORWARD WITH IT.

A. I GUESS YOU WOULD HAVE TO ASK HIM WHETHER HE WOULD BE DETERRED IN THE ABSENCE OF AN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE FROM ANY OF THE PARTIES FROM GOING FORWARD WITH WHAT WAS, AS HE SAID, A SUGGESTION AND NOT SET IN CONCRETE. HE WANTED TO HEAR THE REACTION TO THE PROPOSAL AFTER HE MADE IT.

Q. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN, ON THE ONE HAND, ENCOURAGING ANY PROCESS THAT MOVES THE PARTIES CLOSER TOWARDS PEACE, AND ENCOURAGING EVERYONE TO GO OFF IN HIS OWN DIRECTION. TO WHAT DEGREE DO YOU THINK THE PARTIES, AND I AM INCLUDING THE UNITED NATIONS NOW, ARE HEADING OFF IN THEIR OWN DIRECTIONS AND TO WHAT DEGREE DO YOU THINK THAT KIND OF THING CAN BE DAMAGING, WHERE DIFFERENT PARTIES ARE ACTING UNILATERALLY?

A. I THINK THAT SO LONG AS THE PARTIES CONTINUE TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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STRESS THEIR DESIRE FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT, WHICH IS A COMPREHENSIVE ONE, THAT WHATEVER INITIATIVES ARE TAKEN IN THAT DIRECTION ARE ONES WHICH HAVE PROBABLE UTILITY, AND THAT WE OF COURSE HAVE TO EXAMINE EACH SUGGESTION NOT ONLY FROM OUR OWN VIEWPOINT BUT FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF OTHER POSSIBLE PARTICIPANTS.

Q. ONE OF THE PARTIES INVITED BY WALDHEIM IS THE PLO, AND AS FAR AS I KNOW THE PLO HASN'T EXPRESSED ITS DESIRE FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT. HOW THEN DO YOU SEE WALDHEIM'S PLOY, IF YOU DON'T MIND THE WORD, HELPING THE U.S. AIMS OF GETTING A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST? HOW CAN HAVING THE PLO THERE OR INVITED FACILITATE WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE AFTER, A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT?

CONSIDERING A SUGGESTION AND WHAT OUR POSITION ON IT IS

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GOING TO BE DETERMINED IN LARGE PART BY EVERYTHING WHICH DEVELOPS FROM WHAT OTHERS TELL WALDHEIM, WHAT OTHERS TELL US, THE POSITIONS THAT THEY TAKE ON IT, AND THAT I AM NOT FRANKLY IN A POSITION TO COMMENT ANY FURTHER ON HIS PARTICULAR SUGGESTION, WHICH, I REPEAT, THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAS SUGGESTED AND THAT WE ARE STUDYING AT THIS TIME.

Q. DO YOU APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OR HAVE NO COMMENT ON HIS INVITATION TO THE PLO?

A. THE SUBJECT OF OUR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL IS ONE ON WHICH I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT.

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Q. WHAT IS REALLY THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CAIRO CONFERENCE AND THE PROPOSAL BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL? IT WAS ADDRESSED TO THE SAME PEOPLE AND THE SUBJECT IS EXACTLY THE SAME. WHY SHOULD WE HAVE ANOTHER CONFERENCE PROPOSED? I MEAN WHY SHOULD YOU EVEN CONSIDER PROPOSING ANOTHER CONFERENCE EXACTLY ON THE SAME SUBJECT WITH EXACTLY THE SAME PARTICIPANTS, ONLY THE INVITATIONS HAVE A DIFFERENT STAMP ON THE ENVELOPE?

A. AS I SAID, THE CONSIDERATION THAT WE ARE GIVING IT IS ONE BASED ON OUR OWN REACTIONS AS WE DETECT WHAT THOSE SEEM TO BE NECESSARY AND WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT IT. IT IS NOT A UNITED STATES INITIATIVE. IT IS, THEREFORE, ONE WHICH WE BELIEVE SINCE THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS HAS PROPOSED IT IS WORTHY OF OUR CONSIDERATION AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE GIVING IT.

Q. BUT IT IS OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO DELAY THE SADAT INITIATIVE AND THERE COULD BE NO OTHER REASON FOR IT IF THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO PROPOSALS IS THE PERSON WHO INVITES THE CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE. IF YOU ARE NOT REJECTING IT OUT FRONT, YOU ARE SUGGESTING THAT YOU MAY BE WILLING TO HELP DELAY SADAT'S INITIATIVE.

A. IN THE FIRST PLACE I EMPHATICALLY REJECT THAT NOTION. THE SECOND THING IS I REJECT THE NOTION THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE POSSIBLE REASON WHY THE SECRETARY GENERAL MAY PUT IT FORWARD. BUT I AM IN NO POSITION TO SPECULATE AS TO WHY HE PUT IT FORWARD. I CAN THINK OF SOME OTHER REASONS OTHER THAN THE ONE YOU SUGGESTED, BUT IT IS USELESS FOR ME TO SPECULATE ON IT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT WAS IN HIS MIND.

Q. TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT MR. ATHERTON'S MISSION. DO YOU

HAVE ANY SENSE NOW OF HOW MANY PEOPLE HE IS GOING TO
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TAKE?

A. I RAISED A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS WHICH I THINK GO
TO THIS QUESTION THAT YOU ARE ASKING. FIRST, IT IS NOT
DETERMINED WHO ELSE MIGHT GO, SPECIFICALLY WHETHER STAFF
WOULD GO WITH HIM OR WHETHER STAFFING WOULD BE PROVIDED
OUT OF WHAT IS, AFTER ALL, AN EXCELLENT EMBASSY IN CAIRO.
INSOFAR AS HOW HE WOULD TRAVEL, I WILL GO A LITTLE FURTHER.
IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A PLANE
INVOLVING POSSIBLE PRESS SEATS AND THAT SORT OF THING.
THAT WILL HAVE TO BE ARRANGEMENTS THAT ARE MADE
SEPARATELY BY THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING THAT
CONFERENCE AND HIM. BEYOND THAT IT IS JUST REALLY EARLY
DAYS. I JUST DON'T HAVE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION AND THE
REASON I DON'T HAVE IT IS NOBODY HAS IT.

Q. I GATHER THOUGH THAT YOU ARE THINKING IN TERMS OF A
VERY SMALL ACCOMPANYING PARTY, IF ANY.

A. I BELIEVE THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. THE PRESIDENT INSISTED AS A NUMBER OF POINTS IN HIS
NEWS CONFERENCE THIS MORNING THAT WE WERE GOING TO
SUPPORT AND BE SUPPORTIVE TO THE INITIATIVE, BUT IT
REALLY STUMPS ME WHAT IN THE WORLD ROY AHERN IS GOING
TO DO IN CAIRO. WHY IS HE GOING? WHAT IS THE POINT OF
HIS BEING THERE BEYOND BEING A MUTE SUPPORTIVE PRESENCE?
IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE WORLD THAT THE U.S. CAN DO
WHEN TWO PARTIES HAVE SAT DOWN?

A. ONE OF THE THINGS WE ARE NOT GOING TO DO IS TO
PRESENT AN AGENDA OR IN ANY WAY TRY TO TELL THE TWO
PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED IN WHAT DIRECTION THE TALKS
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MAY GO. THERE ARE ROLES, HOWEVER, WHICH WE COULD
POSSIBLY, IF NECESSARY, PLAY. AMONG THEM WOULD SIMPLY
BE THE OBVIOUS FACILITATIVE ROLE ON SOME ISSUES AS THEY
ARISE. THAT FACILITATIVE ROLE DOES NOT MEAN, FORTUNA-
TELY, A SHUTTLE. IT JUST SIMPLY MEANS AS A THIRD
PARTY WITH INTEREST AND WITH A LEVEL OF TRUST FOR BOTH
PARTIES SIMPLY TO TRY TO KEEP THE DISCUSSIONS MOVING
FORWARD TO THE DEGREE THAT WE CAN.

Q. THIS ISN'T MEANT TO BE MALICIOUS OR TRICKY OR

ANYTHING, BUT IT WAS EASY TO SEE HOW WE COULD BE A FACILITATOR BEFORE WHEN THEY WEREN'T TALKING TO EACH OTHER, BUT HONESTLY HOW CAN WE FACILITATE SOMETHING WHEN TWO GUYS ARE SITTING ACROSS THE TABLE TALKING TO EACH

OTHER?

A. I THINK THAT THE FACT THAT WE WERE INVITED THERE SUGGESTS THAT THOSE WHO MADE THE INVITATION BELIEVED THAT WE COULD PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE AND THAT IN THIS REGARD THERE ARE OFTEN CONFERENCES IN WHICH THE PARTIES HAVE FAR LESS OF A HISTORY OF DIFFICULTY IN TALKING TO EACH OTHER IN WHICH THIRD PARTY ROLES OF NEUTRALS, MEDIATORS OR THE LIKE ENTER IN FOR THE MERE REASON OF BEING A FACILITATOR AND I THINK THAT IN THIS CASE WE WILL PLAY THAT ROLE IF IT IS CALLED UPON.

I AM NOT ABLE TO SPECULATE ON THE COURSE OF THOSE CONVERSATIONS OR HOW THEY ARE GOING TO DEVELOP. I THINK THAT THAT IS PART OF THE PROCESS BETWEEN NOW AND THE 13TH AND ALSO WILL BE PART OF THE PROCESS ITSELF.

Q. I UNDERSTOOD JODY POWELL TO SAY YESTERDAY THAT FROM THE UNITED STATES PERCEPTION THESE TALKS WERE ESSENTIALLY BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE THERE IN A SUPPORTING ROLE. YOU HAVE BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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QUESTIONED ABOUT THAT SUPPORTING ROLE. YOU APPARENTLY NO LONGER ARE USING THE TERM "MEDIATOR," BUT NOW FACILITATOR."

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY HESITANCE TO SAY IF THE QUESTION ARISES OF MEDIATION THAT WE WOULD DO THAT. BUT THE PARTIES ARE TALKING DIRECTLY TO EACH OTHER. THEY HAVE INVITED US TO COME. WE ARE GOING TO GO AND PLAY WHATEVER ROLE SEEMS APPROPRIATE TO THEM AND TO US AS THE TALKS DEVELOP.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY THE U.N. ROLE, AS AN OBSERVER?

A. AS AN OBSERVER, WHICH IS HOW THEY ARE GOING.

Q. SO, WE HAVE TWO PARTICIPANTS, ONE FACILITATOR, ONE OBSERVER.

Q. I WOULD SAY, IN A SHORTHAND WAY, THAT IS PROBABLY A WAY TO PUT IT. IT IS PROBABLY THE BIGGEST MISTAKE I EVER MADE.

Q. WHY ISN'T THE SECRETARY OF STATE GOING? THIS IS A

PRETTY IMPORTANT DISCUSSION. ARE WE TRYING TO INDICATE OUR KIND OF STAYING IN THE BACKGROUND BY KEEPING THE SECRETARY OF STATE AWAY?

A. NO. THE LEVEL OF THE PARTICIPANTS BY THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IS WHAT SETS THE TONE OF OUR OWN INVOLVEMENT.

Q. IF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS REALLY SERIOUS IN FINDING A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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WHY DOESN'T IT THEN SUPPORT THE U.N. MEETING AFTER THE CAIRO MEETING?

A. AGAIN THE QUESTION OF OUR SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION DOESN'T ARISE. WE ARE INTERESTED AT THIS POINT IN WHAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL FINDS AND IN OUR OWN DELIBERATIONS ON THE QUESTION. OUR POSITION WILL BE MADE CLEAR AT A TIME THAT SEEMS APPROPRIATE BASED UPON WHAT WE LEARN AND WHAT HE REPORTS.

Q. SO FAR AS YOU KNOW, TAKE US THROUGH THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS ON ATHERTON'S SELECTION.

A. I THINK THAT THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WENT FORWARD OVER SEVERAL DAYS. I THINK THAT IT WAS NOT, AS YOU ALL KNOW, A QUESTION OF WHETHER WE WERE GOING TO BE REPRESENTED SINCE THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN AT THE TIME AT WHICH WE WERE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE. THE QUESTION OF WHAT LEVEL AND WHO IT WOULD BE I THINK WAS LARGELY A TECHNICAL ONE, AND I DON'T THINK IT WAS ANY MORE INVOLVED THAN THAT AND SINCE I ASKED THAT QUESTION AS OFTEN AS YOU ALL ASKED ME, I THINK THAT IT WAS SIMPLY TRYING TO DECIDE WHO WOULD BE THE MOST APPROPRIATE PERSON TO PARTICIPATE IN VIEW OF WHO WAS PARTICIPATING ON THE OTHER SIDE.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN THE DECISION WAS TAKEN TO GO AT THE TIME THAT WE GOT THE INVITATION? YOU WERE TELLING US HERE ON MONDAY THAT WE WERE STILL SCRATCHING OUR HEADS OVER IT.

A. I WAS SAYING THAT I DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO GIVE YOU ON IT AT THE TIME. BUT WE WERE TRYING TO CONSULT WITH THE OTHER PEOPLE AT THE TIME, AS I THINK IS CLEAR NOW FROM WHAT HAS BEEN SAID, IN AN ATTEMPT TO HELP BRING OTHERS INTO THE PROCESS, TO ATTEMPT TO TRANSACT, TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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ATTEMPT TO PRODUCE SUPPORT FOR THIS MEETING AND TO ALSO SEEK THE VIEWS OF OTHERS WHO WOULD NOT BE DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH THE MEETING BUT WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN WHAT WE HAD TO SAY OR WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY ABOUT IT.

Q. BUT YOU ARE SAYING OUR INSTINCTIVE REACTION TO AN INVITATION OF THAT SORT IS TO ACCEPT IT AND YOUR DELAY IN MAKING THAT PUBLIC WAS JUST IN ORDER TO LURE OTHER PEOPLE IN.

A. IT WAS FOR OUR CONSULTATIONS TO GO FORWARD. I THINK I KEPT SAYING THAT REPEATEDLY.

Q. NOW THAT IT IS OVER, CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT THE RELATIONSHIP WAS BETWEEN THOSE FAMOUS CONSULTATIONS AND THE 72 HOURS OF NOTHING FROM THE ADMINISTRATION ABOUT OUR REACTION?

A. THE RELATIONSHIP WAS SIMPLY FOR US TO TRY TO PLAY AS AFFIRMATIVE A ROLE AS WE COULD THROUGH PRIVATE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS BEFORE WE ANNOUNCED OUR OWN INTENTION.

Q. HOW DID THE FAILURE OF THE UNITED STATES PUBLICLY TO SUPPORT THE MEETING AND TO NAME A PARTICIPANT IN IT HELP THOSE CONSULTATIONS?

A. AMONG OTHER THINGS, SINCE THE PARTICIPANTS OR INVITED PARTICIPANTS KNEW WHAT WE WERE DOING, WHETHER EDITORIAL WRITERS AND OTHER DID, THEY KNEW FULL WELL WHAT OUR POSITION WAS. THEIR DELIBERATIONS THAT THEY WERE UNDERTAKING WERE BEING TAKEN IN THE VIEW OF WHAT WE HAD TOLD THEM ABOUT OUR VIEW OF THE MEETING AND THE FACT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT WE WERE SUPPORTIVE OF IT AND THEY WERE PROCEEDING ON THAT ASSUMPTION AND I GUESS THEY WERE LESS GUIDED BY THE CONFUSION THAT I SOWED THAN BY THE FACT THAT WHAT THEY WERE TOLD BY AMBASSADORS AND OTHERS.

Q. THAT STILL DOESN'T ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHY YOU SOWED OR WERE ORDERED TO SOW CONFUSION FOR 72 HOURS.

A. AGAIN, BECAUSE WE FELT IT WOULD BE MORE USEFUL TO ENGAGE IN A DIPLOMATIC EXERCISE FOR SEVERAL DAYS IN AN ATTEMPT TO BRING ALONG AS MUCH SUCCESS TO THIS ENTERPRISE AS WE COULD THAN TO GO PUBLIC FIRST.

Q. DOES THIS NOW APPLY TO THE REACTION OF THE WALDHEIM

INVITATION? ARE WE GOING THROUGH EXACTLY THE SAME EXERCISE NOW? DID WE INSTINCTIVELY REACT AND ACCEPT, BUT ARE HIDING IT?

A. I HAVE TOLD YOU IN THIS CASE THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT REACTIONS HE GETS TO THIS AND I AM GOING TO LET IT GO AT THAT.

Q. I'M STILL CONFUSED ABOUT THE U.S. VIEW OF WALDHEIM'S PARTY. YOU WANTED TO HAVE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE BY THE END OF THE YEAR. THE TWO PRINCIPAL PARTIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST, EGYPT AND ISRAEL, BOTH AGREED ON YOUR PROCEDURAL TERMS AND BOTH SAID, "LET'S GET THERE RIGHT AWAY." SADAT WAS PREPARED TO GO, I THINK, OCTOBER 10TH OR SOMETHING. HOW THEN CAN ANOTHER PREPARATORY CONFERENCE THAT DOES LITTLE ELSE EXCEPT TRY TO ADD THE PLO TO THE PARTY, HOW DOES THAT FIT IN WITH THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION POLICY?

A. I DON'T KNOW. THAT IS WHY WE ARE STUDYING IT.

Q. BUT I MEAN, WHY THEN DON'T YOU DISAPPROVE OF IT AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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A DIVERSION OR AS A DELAY? YOU, EGYPT AND ISRAEL WANT TO GET TO GENEVA RIGHT AWAY; HERE IS SOME GUY OUT IN LEFT FIELD THROWING A LITTLE PARTY THAT HE SAYS CAN BE IN ANY CITY AS LONG AS THE PLO IS THERE, WOULDN'T IT BE CONSISTENT WITH U.S. POLICY TO DISAPPROVE OF THAT AS A DIVERSIONARY, DELAYING TACTIC?

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN "STUDYING IT?" YOU HAVE TO HAVE AN OPINION OF --

A. NO, I DON'T.

Q. WHY NOT?

Q. NO, I MEAN DOESN'T IT DELAY THINGS? ISN'T IT A FACT THAT HAVING ANOTHER MEETING IS A DELAY? WHETHER YOU THINK IT IS A POSITIVE DELAY OR A NEGATIVE DELAY, DOESN'T IT IN EFFECT DELAY THINGS?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO OFFER YOU ON THOSE QUESTIONS.

Q. WHAT HAPPENED TO GENEVA BY THE END OF THE YEAR?

A. I WAS ASKED THAT TWO DAYS RUNNING -- THIS IS THE THIRD -- AND WHAT I'VE SAID IS THAT, OBVIOUSLY, IT IS AT A POINT IN TIME THAT BECOMES MORE UNLIKELY THAN IT HAS

IN THE PAST.

Q. WHEN YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT IT, YOU SAID BECAUSE AFTER ALL, THE DAYS ARE MOVING ALONG.

A. THAT'S RIGHT.
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Q. HOW ABOUT THE WALDHEIM PROPOSAL, DOES THAT FURTHER DELAY IT?

A. THE WALDHEIM PROPOSAL IS ONE THAT WAS MADE YESTERDAY. REACTIONS FROM THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ASKED HAVE BEEN SOLICITED. THE PROPOSAL IN ANY CASE IS A PROPOSAL -- HE DID NOT SET A DATE, HE DID NOT SAY IT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN; HE SAID HE WANTED TO RUN IT UP AS A TRIAL BALOON, AND SO, THAT'S WHAT WE'RE SAYING.

Q. ARE YOU SAYING THEN, THAT IF THE OTHER MAJOR PARTIES SEEM TO BE INTERESTED IN THE WALDHEIM PROPOSAL, THAT WE WILL THEN BE FOR IT AND WE WILL SEEK TO ADVANCE IT, BUT THAT IF KEY PARTIES SUCH AS ISRAEL ARE FLATLY NEGATIVE, THEN THE UNITED STATES WOULD SIMPLY LET THE IDEA DIE, AND WHEN YOU SAY WE ARE INTERESTED, WHAT THE OTHER PARTIES?

A. I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO HELP YOU ON CONCLUSIONS FROM WHAT I'M SAYING, BUT I CAN SAY GENERALLY, OBVIOUSLY, WE ARE INTERESTED AND WOULD SUPPORT ANYTHING WHICH THE MAJOR PARTIES SUPPORTED, OR WHICH WOULD IN FACT INCREASE THE DIALOGUE.

Q. WOULD THAT BE TRUE WITH ISRAEL'S REFUSAL TO ATTEND?

A. I THINK AGAIN THAT WE WILL JUST HAVE TO SEE WHAT THE ANSWERS ARE, BUT I WOULD SAY ON BACKGROUND THAT, CLEARLY, IT'S SOMETHING WHICH DOES NOT BRING THE CONTENDING PARTIES TOGETHER IS LESS USEFUL THAN ONE THAT DOES.

Q. HOW COULD THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGREE TO DEAL WITH SADAT ON THE WHOLE MIDDLE EAST ISSUE WHEN HE HAS NO AUTHORIZATION TO REPRESENT THE OTHER GOVERNMENTS?

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A. HE'S REPRESENTING HIS COUNTRY, A DIRECT PARTICIPANT IN THE --

Q. BUT A LITTLE WHILE AGO YOU SAID IT'S A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT, HE WAS DISCUSSING A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

A. I SAID IT WAS A STEP TOWARD A COMPREHENSIVE --

Q. SO, THEREFORE, IT IS A BILATERAL TREATY YOU ARE LOOKING FOR?

A. I SAID IT WAS A STEP TOWARD A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT, AND WE BELIEVE IT IS A USEFUL ONE.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US IF THE ADMINISTRATION HAS CHANGED ITS MIND AT ALL IN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS ON WHO TO SEND? WAS ROY AHERTON ALWAYS THE FIRST CHOICE?

A. I PROMISED YOU THAT THIS THING HAS BEEN DISCUSSED BACK AND FORTH AS TO WHO IT WAS GOING TO BE. THERE WASN'T A CLEAR FRONT-RUNNER. IF THERE HAD BEEN, I SURELY WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL IN WHAT IT WAS THAT I WAS SAYING. IT WAS A MATTER OF ONGOING DISCUSSION, AND THIS WAS NOT ONE THAT WAS HELD BACK FOR TWO DAYS BECAUSE A DECISION HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE. THAT ISN'T SO.

Q. WHEN WAS AHERTON INFORMED THAT HE WOULD BE GOING?

A. I'M NOT SURE. BUT WITHIN THE LAST IMMEDIATE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

Q. WELL, TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IS RATHER IMPORTANT SINCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MEMBERS OF YOUR STAFF CONVEYED AN IMPRESSION TO SOME OF US THAT IT WOULD NOT BE AHERTON AND THAT MESSAGE WAS CONVEYED WITHIN THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

A. I UNDERSTAND THAT FULLY. I'M SAYING THE DECISION WAS MADE CLEAR, TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, THIS MORNING.

Q. DID WALDHEIM TELL YOU THAT HE MEANT IT AS A TRIAL BALLOON? YOU USED THIS PHRASE THERE.

A. I'M USING HIS WORDS.

Q. ON THE U.N. MEETING, HAVE YOU ASKED ISRAEL TO RECONSIDER ITS REJECTION OF THE WALDHEIM SUGGESTION, OR ARE YOU GOING TO ASK ISRAEL TO RECONSIDER?

A. WE'RE NOT GOING TO ASK ANY OF THE PARTIES AT THIS POINT TO DO ANYTHING. WE ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT THEIR REACTIONS ARE.

Q. MAY I ASK YOU A QUICK QUESTION ON THE OTHER MEETING, ON THE CAIRO MEETING? CAN YOU TELL US WHEN THE UNITED STATES DECIDED TO ATTEND?

A. I DON'T HAVE THE EXACT TIME FOR YOU, I'M SORRY. I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU.

Q. I MEAN, CHECK THE INFERENCE. I MEAN THAT WE USED A COUPLE OF DAYS OR SO TO TALK TO THE OTHER PARTIES

BEFORE WE ANNOUNCED OUR DECISION. THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT YOU WERE SAYING.

A. I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN GET YOU AS TO WHEN THERE WAS A FIRM DECISION.

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Q. ALONG WITH THAT, CAN YOU CLARIFY AT ALL WHO PROPOSED PUTTING IT OFF AS LATE AS ABOUT DECEMBER 13TH?

A. LET ME GO BACK TO THE INVITATION, O.K.? IT REALLY WASN'T THE FAULT OF ANYTHING ANYBODY SAID THAT SUGGESTED THIS MEETING WAS GOING TO START ON THE THIRD. THE INVITATION SAID, "THE DECISION ON WHEN THE MEETING WILL BE HELD SHOULD BE MADE BY DECEMBER THIRD," NOT THAT THE MEETING SHOULD BEGIN ON DECEMBER THIRD. I DON'T KNOW IF SOMEBODY HAD A FIXED DATE EVER IN HIS MIND THAT IT WOULD START ON THE NEXT DAY.

Q. IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT THE DECISION TO PUT THE CAIRO MEETING IN MID-DECEMBER WOULD MAKE IT HAPPEN ABOUT THE SAME TIME AS WELDHEIM'S PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING TWO WEEKS HENCE.

A. THERE'S NO CONNECTION, NO CONNECTION, NONE.

Q. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE A BIT, PRESUMABLY THIS DATE WAS WORKED OUT IN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES THAT WE KNOW WERE GOING TO CAIRO. WILL THERE NOW BE AN EFFORT IN THE CONTACTS WITH THESE PARTIES TO SET A RELATIVELY FIRM AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING?

A. I'M SURE THAT THERE WILL BE DISCUSSIONS ON HOW TO PROCEED. AS TO A FIRM AGENDA, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW THE DISCUSSIONS ARE GOING TO GO.

Q. WILL THE UNITED STATES BE IN A POSITION TO MAKE

SOME SUGGESTIONS AS TO WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED OR WHAT
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SHOULD BE EXCLUDED?

A. I THINK THE PRIME MOVERS ARE THOSE WHO HAVE
DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN FACE-TO-FACE CONVERSATIONS, AND
WE OF COURSE, WILL BE HAPPY TO GIVE WHATEVER OBSERVA-
TIONS WE HAVE ON IT.

Q. I THINK EVERYONE AGREES THAT THE SOVIETS AND SYRIA
AND CERTAIN OTHER OF THE REJECTIONIST STATES ARE NOT
BEING VERY HELPFULLY FLEXIBLE AT THIS POINT AND I THINK
MOST PEOPLE AGREE THAT THE UNITED STATES AND EGYPT ARE
BEING VERY FLEXIBLE AND ARE ACTING IN A SOMEWHAT POSITIVE
FASHION. COULD YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT HOW YOU WOULD
CHARACTERIZE THE ISRAELI POSITION IN THOSE KINDS OF
TERMS?

A. WE THINK THAT DIRECT CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE
PARTIES SHOWS A WILLINGNESS TO MOVE THE PROCESS
FORWARD -- AND THAT MEANS THE ISRAELIS AND THE
EGYPTIANS, AND TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS DIRECTLY, AND AS
BOTH HAVE SAID, IN AN ATTEMPT TO ARRIVE AT THE NEXT
STEP TOWARD A GENERAL SETTLEMENT. OBVIOUSLY, WE
WELCOME THE ISRAELI POSITION. VANCE

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